

# Iowa Interstate Compact Commission for Military Children

## Progress Report for Academic Year 2015-16



October 2016

State of Iowa  
Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

## **State Board of Education**

Charles C. Edwards, Jr., President, Des Moines  
Michael L. Knedler, Vice President, Council Bluffs  
Brooke Axiotis, Des Moines  
Michael Bearden, Gladbrook  
Bettie Bolar, Marshalltown  
Diane Crookham-Johnson, Oskaloosa  
Angela English, Dyersville  
Mike May, Spirit Lake  
Mary Ellen Miller, Wayne County  
Robert Nishimwe, Student Member, Des Moines

## **Administration**

Ryan M. Wise, Director and Executive Officer  
of the State Board of Education

## **Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation**

Jeremy Varner, Division Administrator

## **Bureau of Career and Technical Education**

Pradeep Kotamraju, Bureau Chief  
Thomas Beasley, Consultant

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or complaints related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number: 515-281-5295, or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661-4544, telephone number: 312-730-1560, FAX number: 312-730-1576, TDD number: 877-521-2172, email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov.

## BACKGROUND

Iowa is the temporary home to approximately 1,000 active duty military service members and their families, and the long-term home for 19,400-plus military Guard and Reserve personnel and their families. Iowa has almost 20,000 military dependent school-aged children. Families belong to the Iowa National Guard, the US Army Reserves, the Iowa Air National Guard, the Marines, the Marine Reserves, the Navy, the Navy Reserves, and the US Army. Iowa has military installations located in Des Moines (Fort Des Moines), and Johnston (Camp Dodge). There are many Guard, Reserves, and Armed Forces Reserve Centers across the state.

The Iowa Compact Commission for Educational Opportunity for Military Dependents (known in short form as the Iowa Compact) is designed to assist military families with their transition to Iowa and to the public school system. The Iowa Compact addresses key educational transition issues encountered by military families including enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility, and graduation. Children of active duty members of the uniformed services, National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders, and members or veterans who are medically discharged or retired for one year, are eligible for assistance under the Iowa Compact. The Iowa Compact uses a comprehensive approach to provide a consistent policy in every school district that military dependents choose to enter. The Iowa Compact has no funds to support an annual meeting, pay dues, etc. Finally, it should be noted that the Iowa Compact applies only to interstate transfers, not in-state transfers.

### **Status Report**

Iowa was the 14<sup>th</sup> state to sign on to the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. Since then, all 50 states and territories have signed on to the Interstate Compact. Iowa paid its 2015 Military Interstate Compact Commission (MIC3) dues assessment in July 2015.

Pursuant to Iowa Code section 256H, the Iowa Compact is a Governor-appointed council that has been established for the purpose of removing barriers to educational success imposed on the children of military families because of frequent deployment of their parents (Iowa Code section 256H.1.1). The seven-member commission consists of a school superintendent or designee; the Iowa Department of Education Director or designee; four gubernatorial appointments, one whom is appointed as the Iowa Compact chairperson and another is the military families' education liaison; and a joint appointment made by the Iowa Legislature (Iowa Code section 256H.2.2).

The Iowa Compact is required to meet at least once each calendar year for the purpose of addressing issues involving the dependents of military families seeking resolution such as:

1. official, unofficial, or hand-carried education records or transcripts;
2. continued enrollment at the same grade level when transferring between states;
3. course and program placements, including special education services, in all subject areas;
4. waiving of course and program prerequisites and other preconditions; and
5. granting of additional absences due to situations related to deployments.

A full description of the issues is detailed in Iowa Code sections 256H.1.4, 256H.1.5, 256H.1.6, and 256H.1.7.

The Iowa Compact had one issue come before it and the issue was resolved without requiring the Iowa Compact to meet in person. The issue related to using junior high school credits from another state towards an Iowa high school diploma, when that state accepted junior high school credit towards their graduation requirement. The Iowa Compact had previously dealt with a similar issue and came to the conclusion that since Iowa does not include junior high school credit towards graduation, and the student was not a senior, junior high school credit could not be used in Iowa towards graduation requirements. Based on this precedent, the school district in question did not allow the counting of the credits towards the student's graduation requirements.

### **An Ongoing Issue**

No student issues were brought before the Iowa Compact during the 2015-2016 academic year. The Iowa Department of Education expects to reconvene the Iowa Compact this academic year, discuss its role, and ensure alignment with the Governor's Home Base Iowa initiative. The Governor's Home Base Iowa initiative seeks to attract and assist veterans and transitioning service members. Given the Iowa Compact's focus is on ease of entry into Iowa schools for students in military families moving to the state and its currently limited scope, the Department is pursuing alignment of efforts and a discussion about the future role of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.